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APPOINTMENT OF A DISCUSSED AT SOME

Last Regular Meeting Doc Mayor Southern Vote Appointment of a Co to be Necessary—Other

The Council of 1904 he regular session Dec. 15th conformity with the statutory session and several committees will be required arrangements of business fiscal state. As a matter of life of the present Council expire until the new all occur in—about the second January.

Aid Maund was the fee when Clerk Knowliss minutes, which were confirmed.

From Messrs. John Clark Connelly, Jas. Bryson, C applying for the postman lecturer.—Laid on table.

From E. A. Pogue, B. F. E. Moore, respecting for street watering tax committee.

From John Arnold, of compensation for an inj horse, by driving into at and unlighted ditch on on Sept. last.—Laid on table.

From Wm. Packard, re on personal property.—E dittee.

From M. E. Adams, resp assessment of her dwelling committee.

From Lillian O. Jacks tax.—Finance committee.

From Jeremiah Shindler for remission of taxes.—E mittee.

From Mrs. L. Archard testing against the action session in raising the at her grocery stock \$3 Burke Bros' had been in Mayor Southern—That double the amount of tax at not less than \$100. ought to know that.—E mittee.

From C. S. Blackwell, re reference to personality of Henry Bro.—Finance

From J. A. McClain, at of interest on arrears claiming the fault of collector.—Finance

From Geo. Vanzant, Pe dog tax.—Finance comm From Good Roads Mat Bradford, enclosing e referred to 1905 Board e

From D. C. Trow, tax collector, enclosing report

CASTOR, The Kind You'll Signatures at

Christmas Number, December, 1904.

Lost; A Santa Claus.



Donald was just seven years old when he lost the first saint in his calendar. Into his neighborhood there had come some boys with a few more years and vastly more worldly knowledge to their credit, and from them he

learned many facts and theories of boy life. Most startling of all their statements, however, was this: "There ain't no such person in all the world as Santa Claus."

"But I know there is," Donald answered the challenge valiantly. "I know there is, because he brings me things that I write for."

"Huh! it's only your father and your mother that give you the things, and they tell you it's Santa Claus."

Donald resisted while his little arguments lasted. But the boys added reason to reason, proof to proof, and at last Donald's faith in the old saint was dispelled forever. The loss meant little to him; in fact, it was, in his own small brain, a distinct gain. Did not this freshly acquired knowledge bring him nearer to these new heroes in his life, these boys who knew everything?

The trouble all came later, when he looked with wide-open brown eyes straight into his mother's face and said, "There really and truly is no Santa Claus, is there, mamma?"

Mrs. Vane, forgetting that babies do grow into boys, answered carelessly, "Why, of course, dearie; you know there is."

"But, mamma," persisted the boy, "I know there isn't. A man couldn't come down the chimney that way, and carry all those things, and be at all the chimneys at once, and bring the toys I've seen in the shops and—"

"But, Don, boy," cried his mother, half laughing, wholly vexed because her baby was prying behind life's veil of mystery, "you know there is a Santa Claus as well as I do. Haven't you seen his pictures? Now, how could they make pictures of Santa Claus if there was no such person? Tell me that. He'll be here pretty soon, too, slipping down the chimney, oh, so quietly, with a bundle of toys on his back."

She did not look at the round, questioning eyes, out of which a tiny soul was asking for faith and truth and finding them not.

Donald turned away, and looked down from the window upon his playmates in the garden.

"What do you want Santa Claus to bring you this year, Don?" asked Mrs. Vane; and not noticing the boy's silence, she went on: "Will you write him a letter and tell him?"

He wouldn't get it, would he? Honestly, would he get it? The simple baby faith was making one last effort to restore order out of chaos.

But Mrs. Vane was a bit vexed by the child's persistence.

And Donald's poor little distracted soul slipped down and down into the blackest abysses of despair.

He crept from the garden to the nursery, avoiding the hall that led to his mother's room. He refused to eat his nursery supper, refused to go down to see his parents after their dinner, although this had always been one of his dearest privileges. Mandy, his nurse, fearing an illness, asked if he had pains here or pains there, if his head ached, if his throat was sore, but to all her questions he only shook his head. Even pains seemed unreal to him to-night. When he was ready for bed, in his long white gown, he stood for a moment stiff and still, and then plunged hurriedly under the covers.

"Now, Donald," cautioned the nurse, "you've got to get right up and say your prayers."

She did not hear his smothered "I won't; there's no use." For even so far as this had Donald's doubts carried him. If there was no Santa Claus, there might be no God either. His mother had told him that there was a Santa Claus, and she also had told him of God.

"I'll never say my prayers again." He raised a defiant face above the sheets.

"For shame, Donald!" cried the nurse. "You know how unhappy mamma'll be when I go down and tell her how naughty you are."

"And then Donald, knowing that he must not make mamma unhappy, chivalrous still to a dethroned queen, knelt and prayed,—prayed words that seemed to him to float away into space; that were heard by no near, dear, loving Father, who would guard him tenderly through the dark night, who was glad if he was good, even if he tried to be good, who was sorry if he was naughty. The loneliness of an empty universe opened out before his childish mind, and Donald, under the covers, sobbed himself to sleep.

The next night he knelt in silence before his bed.



"Of course he will, Donald," she answered. Hasn't he always gotten your letters? Why do you ask such silly questions? Would mother ask you to write the letters if he wouldn't get them? Run right out now and play, and don't be a silly baby."

After he had gone, she wondered vaguely if she ought not to have told him the truth. "He really is such a baby, though," she argued; "it would be a pity to destroy his faith in baby things."

Donald, down in the garden, was digging his toes into the gravel, his eyes absorbed in his work.

"There is so a Santa Claus!" He made the statement boldly, bravely. "I knew it all the time. He really does come down the chimneys, too. My"—there was just a moment's hesitation, in which the small soul struggled to protect its shattered idol—"my nurse says there is, and she knows."

"Oh, your nurse!" jeered his companions. "She'd tell you anything, you're such a baby."

"I'm not a baby any more; I'm a boy."

And the childish lips, that trembled babyishly, even while they made the stalwart assertion, spoke the truth. For doubt and unbelief have no place in a baby's world, and Donald's eyes were looking dimly into a universe of shaken trust, of broken faith. He knew well enough that there was no Santa Claus; that it was only his father, only his mother, that gave him the toys, that trimmed the tree and filled his stockings. But it was not for the pudgy old saint that he grieved. It was for the lost trust in his mother, the confidence destroyed. The world seemed to slip from under his baby feet when he realized that what she said was not true? If she said that there was a Santa Claus, when there really wasn't—and there surely wasn't—what was there of all the other things she had told him about that was true? Wasn't anything true or real? Weren't the fairies real? Perhaps she wasn't real. Perhaps she'd be gone now if he went to look for her. Perhaps if he could only find out, he would know that even papa wasn't real.

"You must say your prayers out loud, Donald," cautioned the nurse.

"I'd rather whisper," muttered Donald; but no prayers were crossing the set lips, no prayers were in his stubborn little mind,—only rage and unbelief filled his soul as he knelt there, a little white larva in a world of liars, a golden-haired hypocrite in a world of hypocrites. He did not believe that there was any God to be prayed to, but he would not argue with the nurse, neither would he make mamma unhappy by disobeying her; and since it was all a lie, all just pretending, he would pretend to obey, pretend to pray.

In the same spirit he wrote his letter to Santa Claus. His mother asked him to write it, and he told himself that if she wanted to pretend in that way, why, he would, too. But, in truth, he did write two letters. In one he listed the toys and games and books he wanted. The other was very short: "Der Santa Claus if you are real please let me see you, I don't want any thing else."

He was ashamed of this last letter. He would not, for worlds, have let any one see it. But might not the boys be wrong? Was there not one little, tiny chance that they were wrong and that everything else in the world was right? The list of toys was laid upon the coals of the library fireplace with time-honored interest and ceremony, but the other letter was burned in secret in the nursery, late at night, while Mandy slept. Even as Donald put the paper on the coal-dotted ashes he felt a thrill of his new-born scorn of all the world surge through him. How can he get the letters, he questioned, when I see them burn up myself? In his own mind, though, an answer was born. Of course, the thoughts could go up in the smoke and be carried to him that way! But then he was not everywhere. There was no Santa Claus anywhere.

The outside air was full of a Christmas chill, and indoors a Christmas cheer and gaiety filled every

heart,—every heart, that is, save Donald's own. He was valiantly pretending to care for things, pretending to believe in Santa Claus, pretending to believe what his mother told him. And all the time there was a horrible lump in his throat that would not be swallowed, and all the time he was afraid that he would cry,—cry like a baby right before everybody.

Mandy had taken him down to buy his Christmas presents, and he had suited his own taste in the gifts he had purchased. He was a long, long time finding anything that pleased him for his mother, but at last he discovered a tiny silver image of Santa Claus.

"But what will your mother want of that?" questioned Mandy.

"I—I want it for her," answered Donald, and the expression on his face was one that Mandy had learned not to combat.

On Christmas morning the library doors were thrown wide apart with Christmas pomp and the Christmas tree was revealed. But Donald was blind to the glories of tinsel and glass, blind to the piles of toys. He saw only his mother in the beautiful violet gown he loved, and he wanted to run to her, to bury his face in her lap, and to beg her to tell him what was real and true in the world, if anything at all was real and true. But this he could not do.

"See what a lovely tree Santa Claus has brought you, dearie!" Mrs. Vane cried, and pointing to the chimney, she added: "He left a bit of his fur right here in the corner. That's because you asked me if he really and truly did come down the chimney, you know. He wanted you to be quite sure."

For a moment Donald's world grew white and full of joy. Was it true after all?—was it really and honestly true? His mother's words were so bright and gay. He was not gay like that when he lied. Was this truth or was she just lying still? But only for an instant did this thought linger, then darkness again closed over him. It was none of it true, and he—oh, he must just go on pretending.

When he distributed his own gifts the little package for his mother could not be found. No one knew where it was. No one had seen it. Nowhere could it be found, though Donald, apparently, searched for it as diligently as any one. But that Christmas night he lay alone in his little bed, his gift for his mother clasped tight in his hand.

"I couldn't give it to her," he sobbed over and over again, speaking to the empty darkness.

He was wide awake, listening to the noises of the night. At last he heard, coming down the passage that led to the nursery, his mother's footsteps. He must pretend to be asleep! He lay there, breathing quietly, evenly. He heard the soft swish of her silk skirts on the floor, but she could not see his quivering eyelids in the darkened nursery. He knew that she was going to a dance, that she was dressed for it, that her soft white arms were on his pillow.

"Mother's boy, mother's blessed boy, mother's own blessed baby!" she whispered, bending over him, resting her soft lips on his forehead. There was a passionate tenderness in her tones, adoring, worshipping love, but the boy lay still. She left the room, and again he heard the swishing skirts, the light footsteps in the hall.

There was no doubting the love

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Handwritten signature: Kenneth Dennis

As, by my side, he... She brought from... I scanned her... eyes... I had no word... But when at last... Came across... I wondered that... To speak what...

It a H



low wooden bridge... and American... their own space... phed...

ounding the... to see if the green... were still coming... the train would... find a wet cob... engines appeared... found the largest... the sun... cal windows as... was as if she had... the other...

"That's where... driver, resting on... his head slightly... from the track... "I was pulling... on, releasing the... notch as we str... river, and they w... We used to as the... there as fast... safety of Mr. Rob... to hit the hill at... double delay frog... and court disgrac...

The driver move... the faintest possi... and the fireman w... dropped to the coo... "Of course, yo... planned, that the... The few Yankee... reasons, came de... test, but the railro... As often as there... arrest. Every time... went to jail. The... intelligent men... his fire-wagon, and... of hating the Yan... stand on a bridge... ing the driver wou... down, and, at the... rotting in a Mexic... ny downfall, I can... consolation engin... on my trail. As I... see a pig of a Peon... bridge, I whistled... and finally revers... stopped, turned a... could travel to the... had kicked the... the face of the foot... the train was not... yellow. I pulled... the Peon crossed... his knees, and at... him up and escap... "We doubted the... end of my run they... marched out of arr... the court to the jail... (but no water) to w... it over. The rail... United States Cou... or tired or attend... so I stayed in jail... "Months passed... mails of all classes... space, and passed... count time. I had... fine day they thro... the soldier showed... he gave him a vigo... whirled and knock... turned and came... been in and I to... that they would... on your members... time."

"To my surpris... the least unbusiness... made cigarettes, but... been so long on the... not take the risk... "Late in the eve... buld outside, the al... the shaft of sunlight... like a beautiful bird... Signor," she cried... to remember as the... head of the govern... woman, and a mon... with the soldier w... explained to the girl... like lightning for a... something, and the... outside and show... stepped out. The... could, caught the... him in and gave him... off his feet.